

**Staff Jurisdiction Analysis Summary  
Sierra County Regional Agency  
2012-13 CalRecycle Jurisdiction Review Cycle**

Based upon review of diversion program implementation, LAMD staff recommends Sierra County Regional Agency (RA) as making a good faith effort (GFE) to meet the requirements of AB939. The RA is implementing its programs and continues making improvements. Sierra County is a sparsely populated, very remote county in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Like many mountain counties, communities within Sierra County are separated geographically from one another due to topographic features. All recyclable materials must be transported significant distances to material processing facilities. Despite these barriers, sufficient programs have been put in place in the County. Diversion and recycled content procurement programs have been observed to be effective as summarized below:

- **Residential:** The County has a “blue bag” curbside recycling collection program. Residents purchase “blue bags” at local stores. Most residents self-haul materials including greenwaste to the landfill or one of the County’s four transfer stations. Commingled recycling as well as cardboard (OCC) is available at each location. Self-hauled green waste (brush, limbs, slash, etc.) is accepted at no charge creating an incentive to divert this material. In 2012, the hauler mailed informational fliers indicating the landfill and all county transfer stations accept comingled recycling. The small, dispersed population in the county does not support a redemption center given volumes needed and costs associated with being sustainable, so some recyclables are self-hauled for redemption out-of-county. Quarterly mailings are sent about the recycling program and fliers are passed out at the landfill where there is signage to direct self-haulers to recycling stations. The County’s website also contains program information. The hauler direct mails recycling information on a quarterly basis and distributes informational fliers at the landfill. The hauler also has information available on its website. Recycling signage is well posted at the landfill assisting residents in participating in the available diversion options. The landfill is the ideal location to educate and conduct outreach, given the traffic and regular participation of residents who self-haul materials. LAMD staff will work with the County and hauler to ensure efforts are made to educate residents and businesses about the “blue bag” recycling program. Sierra County’s website has minimal data on recycling education. LAMD staff will continue to offer the RA assistance with making website updates. LAMD staff will continue working with the County regarding potential buy-back and drop-off center opportunities, and promotion of curbside recycling.
- **Commercial:** A variable rate structure, with fees for additional cans or larger can sizes, creates an incentive to reduce waste. In addition, while waste not containing recyclable material is free to dispose (disposal fees are part of yearly parcel tax), waste containing recyclables is charged a fee of \$12 per yard to dispose. Program education is effective in educating businesses about recycling options locally, and is provided consistently to keep businesses aware it is an expectation. Having fliers distributed at the landfill is very effective because self-haul is a frequent practice. The educational fliers are provided to self-hauling businesses before they unload materials to encourage diversion at a key moment.

- **MCR:** In 2012, Sierra County developed new brochures to be in compliance with MCR regulations. An informational flier was sent quarterly to commercial customers and all entities the law applies to explaining Mandatory Commercial Recycling law in 2012. These fliers also distributed through the hauler's annual billing inserts in 2013. The County identified only five entities covered by MCR and called each to explain the law. All of these entities currently recycle. In 2012 and 2013, the hauler sent quarterly commercial recycling educational fliers to business customers. The County continues to adequately implement its education and outreach activities, including print materials distribution, website information posted on both the County and the hauler's websites and direct phone calls. The County also monitors the five commercial entities that meet the threshold and all are in compliance with the law.
- **Construction and Demolition (C&D):** Permit applicants are provided with an informational flyer on C&D recycling. Waste generated through C&D activities are transported directly to either of the C&D diversion facilities. Sierra County notes; on average, there are four to six building permit applications for new home construction each year, in addition to a few remodel applications. There is a financial incentive to divert since contractors are charged \$15.59 a cubic yard at the landfill for C&D material (where recoverable material is pulled out of the waste stream) versus C&D materials from contractors deposited at the transfer stations costs an extra \$2 a cubic yard at \$17.59. Government remodel projects include language instructing contractors to divert as much material as possible and Sierra County reports more than 75% of these materials being diverted. LAMD staff will continue working with the County regarding C&D challenges (primarily lack of C&D recycling infrastructure), and landfill capacity issues..
- **Government:** Sierra County and the City of Loyalton governments are very small. County employees use desk-side containers to recycle paper and all offices have beverage container recycling containers available. The County Sheriff's office has comingled recycling containers, e-waste is recycled and blue bags are provided to government facilities and programs for comingled recycling. The County recycles paint and reuses paints. In addition, the County uses a prepaid, mail-in service to recycle all printer ink cartridges. Any excess furniture and office supplies are listed on bulletin boards and e-mails to encourage reuse. The County sets printers and copiers for duplex printing when possible. Grass-cycling is practiced on lawns, as well as the park in Downieville. Sierra County's Road Department reuses inert materials and metals. The Road Department procures re-used road grindings from CalTrans to stabilize dirt roads and prevent erosion. While there is no official policy, the RA members purchase recycled-content and/or other environmentally preferable products including paper, recycled printer cartridges, tire derived mats, mixed latex paint, re-treaded tires, composted landscaping material, tissue paper, plastic promotional items, recycled benches and some natural fertilizing material. Landscape bark and lumber are reused. The County has a preference for buying in bulk, utilizing bulk packaging, rather than individually packaged items ordered more frequently. Double sided copying, purchase of paper and envelopes with recycled content and use of bulk packaging are required.